

Budget Activity 7: Senior Corps

Table 36: Summary of budget estimates for Senior Corps (dollars in millions)

Budget Items	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Estimate ⁱ	FY 2008 Request	Increase/ (Decrease)
RSVP	\$59,685	\$59,685	\$65,643	\$5,958
Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)	110,937	110,937	97,550	(13,387)
Senior Companion Program (SCP)	46,964	46,964	41,299	(5,665)
Total Budget Authority	\$217,586	\$217,586	\$204,492	(\$13,094)

ⁱSee technical note on page 5 regarding 2007 estimate.

2008 Request Summary

For FY 2008, the Corporation requests \$204,492,000 for the three programs comprising the Senior Corps, a decrease of \$13.1 million from the 2007 Continuing Resolution estimate. Collectively, the three Senior Corps programs will fund approximately 506,000 federally supported Senior Corps volunteers and will leverage approximately 91,000 community volunteers.

The limited funds available for FY 2008 required the Corporation to strategically allocate scarce resources to Senior Corps programs that effectively recruit and retain Baby Boomer volunteers. The RSVP program offers the greatest capacity for growth to welcome and accommodate the largest number of seniors and Baby Boomers. RSVP is the most flexible of the three Senior Corps programs in terms of service opportunities and schedule. The ability of RSVP to effectively attract and retain the talents of Baby Boomers hinges on developing innovative volunteer opportunities that are adapted to the changing needs of this potential pool of volunteers. Such volunteer opportunities must offer inducements such as the ability to use their career skills to benefit their communities, to learn new things through their volunteer service, and to provide volunteer recognition that resonate with Baby Boomers.

In 2008, we will launch a Boomer Corps initiative within the RSVP program to promote new and innovative strategies for engaging Boomers in service. This initiative will help develop a new menu of flexible opportunities for individuals to choose one time, periodic, or intensive volunteer activities. The Corporation will also expand the national marketing campaign to recruit and retain Baby Boomer volunteers both in Corporation programs and in the nonprofit sector.

The Corporation expects that budgetary decreases to the FGP and SCP programs will be absorbed through volunteer attrition and current volunteers will not be displaced.

Overview

The Senior Corps' three programs, RSVP, Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), and Senior Companion Program (SCP), enable volunteers ages 55 and over to meet the needs of their communities and benefit from a meaningful volunteer experience. In FY 2006, Senior Corps volunteers provided approximately 121 million hours of service.

Senior Corps volunteers help to meet many other critical community needs, including:

- » Mentoring children and youth in disadvantaged circumstances;
- » Modeling parenting skills to adolescent mothers;
- » Caring for children with special or exceptional needs;

- » Enabling frail seniors to stay living in their own homes by helping them with daily living tasks and providing companionship;
- » Providing respite for caregivers of frail elderly;
- » Coordinating blood drives;
- » Organizing Neighborhood Watch programs; and
- » Providing business and technical expertise to local community groups.

For more than four decades, the Senior Corps programs have engaged volunteers age 55 and over. The 55-plus population now increasingly includes members of the 77 million Baby Boomer generation—individuals born between 1946 and 1964—who began turning age 60 in January of 2006. As a cohort, these postwar individuals have an unprecedented cultural identity and have redefined cultural values. They are generally better educated and more ethnically and economically diverse than previous generations.

They tend to view aging and retirement as a new chapter in life, a time for continued development, and for giving back to the community. Based on a Corporation funded analysis of Baby Boomers, they have the highest volunteer participation rate of any demographic group, with 33.4 percent of all Boomers volunteering in a variety of capacities.

Fostering volunteering among this highly-educated and skilled generation of adults will be critical to solving many of the social challenges facing our nation. However, findings from external research also suggest that, unlike the World War II generation, these individuals will not volunteer out of a sense of obligation, but rather if the volunteer opportunity fulfills a personal goal. The “tried and true” strategies for recruiting and managing volunteers will no longer meet the needs of Baby Boomer and future volunteers.

RSVP

To effectively recruit and retain Baby Boomer volunteers, RSVP grantees will have to offer them greater choices, variety, and flexibility so they can pick the volunteer opportunities that most closely match their unique skills, interests, and talents. The Boomer Corps initiative within the RSVP program will model these innovative strategies to engage Boomers in service. Current RSVP sponsors, as well as new organizations, would be eligible to apply, and new three-year grants in 2008 will be awarded competitively.

In FY 2008, the program proposes:

- » A \$6 million increase to launch a Boomer Corps to mobilize Baby Boomer and community volunteers, which will fund approximately 650 Baby Boomer RSVP Service Leaders and 32,360 new RSVP volunteers in an estimated 26 new projects;
- » Statutory language which would enable the Corporation to re compete RSVP grants every three years; and
- » Development of plans and timelines to phase in grant recompetition, with volunteers assured of continuing their service within the same geographic area.

SCP

Concurrent with the aging of the Baby Boomers is a growing emphasis on home and community-based support to help individuals retain their independence as they age—preferably in their own homes for as long as possible. The Senior Companion Program is already delivering such services to nearly 60,000 individuals and caregivers annually. In FY 2008, the program proposes:

- » A total of \$41.1 million to support an estimated 8,750 Federal Volunteer Service Years, or 14,800 Senior Companions who will provide independent living services to an estimated 52,700 clients and caregivers. This represents a 12.4 percent reduction from the 2007 Continuing Resolution estimate, but is still below the SCP annual attrition rate of 19 percent. The Corporation expects that budgetary decreases to the SCP will be absorbed through volunteer attrition and current Senior Companions will not be displaced.

FGP

Across the country, Foster Grandparents devote their volunteer service entirely to youth in a variety of capacities. For example, they offer emotional support to child victims of abuse and neglect, tutor children with low literacy skills, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities and severe illnesses.

In FY 2008, the program proposes:

- » A total of \$97.1 million to support an estimated 21,350 Federal Volunteer Service Years, or 27,400 Foster Grandparents who will provide mentoring and other services to more than 231,400 children and youth annually. This represents a 12.4 percent reduction from the 2007 Continuing Resolution estimate, but is still below the FGP annual attrition rate of 14 percent. The Corporation expects that budgetary decreases to the FGP will be absorbed through volunteer attrition and current Foster Grandparents will not be displaced.

Table 37: Vital statistics for Senior Corps

Program Statistics	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Number of federally funded CNCS awards/grantees	1,272	1,272	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,229
Average Federal award/grant						
RSVP	\$75,046	\$74,348	\$75,473	\$78,155	\$78,155	\$82,680
Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)	\$330,996	\$329,382	\$335,403	\$333,894	\$333,894	\$333,894
Senior Companion Program (SCP)	\$236,938	\$236,153	\$236,934	\$238,732	\$238,732	\$238,732
Number of Direct Volunteers						
RSVP	468,600	447,500	441,800	433,300	433,300	465,300
FGP	32,500	31,500	30,900	30,550	30,550	27,400
SCP	16,500	16,275	15,600	16,400	16,400	14,800
Total Senior Corps Volunteers	517,600	495,275	488,300	480,250	480,250	507,500
Number of clients served by SCP	57,000	58,000	56,826	57,000	57,000	53,300
Number of children and youth served by FGP	262,000	263,000	263,300	264,000	264,000	231,400